

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5639

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 16491

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, CZ

SUBJ: VISIT TO INDIA OF CZECHOSLOVAK PREMIER STROUGAL

SUMMARY: STROUGAL VISIT DECEMBER 2-8 PRODUCED FIVE ROUTINE AGREEMENTS AND POSSIBLY A SIGNIFICANT CZECHOSLOVAK ARMS SUPPLY DEAL. THE VISIT COMMUNIQUE INCLUDED LANGUAGE OPPOSING FOREIGN INDIAN OCEAN MILITARY BASES "LIKE THE ONE ON DIEGO GARCIA," AND THE CZECHOSLOVAK'S "SATISFACTION" WITH ASSURANCES THAT INDIAN NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY WILL FIND ONLY PEACEFUL APPLICATIONS. MRS. GANDHI ACCEPTED AN INVITATION TO VISIT CZECHOSLOVAKIA AT AN UNSPECIFIED TIME. END SUMMARY.

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1. CHAIRMAN OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK COUNCIL OF MINISTERS LUBOMIR STROUGAL VISITED INDIA DECEMBER 2-8. ACCOMPANYING HIM WAS A DELEGATION THAT INCLUDED FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER BARCAK, ENGINEERING MINISTER BAHYL, CPC CENTRAL COMMITTEE DEPUTY INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT HEAD CHEBEN, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF SUNDRY INDUSTRIAL MINISTRIES AND THE STATE PLANNING COMMISSION. PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED RESULTS OF THE VISIT WERE SIGNATURE OF FIVE BILATERAL DOCUMENTS OF A FAIRLY ROUTINE CHARACTER INCLUDING A CONSULAR CONVENTION AND THE RENEWAL FOR FIVE YEARS OF THE INDO-CZECHOSLOVAK RUPEE PAYMENT AGREEMENT. A MORE IMPORTANT RESULT, HOWEVER, MAY HAVE BEEN CONCLUSION OF A SECRET AGREEMENT FOR SUPPLY BY CZECHOSLOVAKIA ON RUPEE CREDIT OF SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF L-39 MILITARY AIRCRAFT, T-55 TANKS, AND OT-62 APC'S. INFORMATION ON THIS DEAL OBTAINED BY DAO NEW DELHI IS REPORTED SEPARATELY IN USDAO NEW DELHI 1720 OF DECEMBER 1974.

2. THOUGH STROUGAL ARRIVED HARD ON THE HEELS OF HUNGARIAN PRIME MINISTER FOCK (NEW DELHI 16103) AND GDR PRIME MINISTER SINDERMAN (NEW DELHI 16307) THE GOI TOOK PAINS TO ACCORD HIM AN EQUALLY WARM, AND IN THE VIEW OF SOME, A WARMER RECEPTION. IN HER WELCOMING SPEECH MRS. GANDHI STRESSED THE "CLOSE EMOTIONAL BOND" BETWEEN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND INDIA DATING FROM THE 1930'S. A MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OFFICER SUBSEQUENTLY TOLD US THAT MRS. GANDHI AND GOI LEADERS FEEL THERE IS A SPECIAL "AFFINITY" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE OFFICIAL CITED MRS. GANDHI'S VISITS TO PRAGUE WITH HER FATHER AT THE TIME THE MUNICH CRISIS AND IN 1972 AS PRIME MINISTER; POINTED TO THE HIGH LEVEL OF CZECH SCHOLARSHIP ON INDIA; AND SAID THAT MANY INDIANS INCLUDING THE PRIME MINISTER FEEL THE TWO PEOPLES HAVE SHARED COMPARABLE UNHAPPY EXPERIENCES WITH THE GREAT POWERS. THE MEA OFFICIAL WAS AWARE OF THE IRONY OF MRS. GANDHI'S PREOCCUPATION WITH MUNICH TO THE EXCLUSION OF MORE RECENT HISTORY (SHE COMMENTED IN HER WELCOMING SPEECH THAT IN 1938 "A CONCERT OF TIMID POWERS OFFERED UP CZECHOSLOVAKIA AS A SACRIFICE TO HITLER'S TYRANNY") BUT EXPLAINED THAT AN ALLUSION BY AN INDIAN OFFICIAL TO 1968 WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE.

3. FIVE DOCUMENTS SIGNED PUBLICLY DURING THE VISIT WERE:

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- A CONSULAR CONVENTION;
- A FIVE-YEAR TRADE AND PAYMENTS AGREEMENT;
- A PROTOCOL ON THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE INDO-CZECHOSLOVAK JOINT COMMISSION FOR ECONOMIC, TRADE AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION;
- AN AGREEMENT ON ECONOMIC PLANNING COOPERATION; AND
- A RADIO AND TELEVISION COOPERATION AGREEMENT.

ADDITIONALLY, THE INDIAN PRESS HAS REPORTED A CULTURAL AGREEMENT IS BEING FINISHED UP FOR SIGNATURE AT A LATER DATE IN PRAGUE. THE CONSULAR CONVENTION IS INDIA'S SECOND, AND IS SAID TO BE PATTERNED AFTER THE INDO-SOVIET AGREEMENT CONCLUDED IN NOVEMBER 1973. THE TRADE AND PAYMENTS AGREEMENT RENEWS AN AGREEMENT DUE TO EXPIRE AT THE END OF 1974. IT KEEPS IN FORCE FOR ANOTHER FIVE YEARS THE SYSTEM OF BILATERAL RUPEE CLEARING EMPLOYED IN INDO-CZECHOSLOVAK AID AND TRADE TRANSACTIONS. THE JOINT COMMISSION PROTOCOL WAS "INITIALED" NOVEMBER 28 BY JOINT COMMISSION CO-CHAIRMAN BARCAK AND CHATTOPADHYAYA, THE INDIAN COMMERCE MINISTER, AND WAS THEN HELD SIX DAYS FOR SIGNATURE BY THE SAME PAIR WITH APPROPRIATE CEREMONY DURING STROUGAL'S VISIT. THE DOCUMENT APPARENTLY FIXES NO CONCRETE COMMITMENTS, BUT STATES IN GENERAL TERMS THE DESIRABILITY OF INCREASED COOPERATION IN INDUSTRY, COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING MINERAL DEVELOPMENT, RADAR TECHNOLOGY, AND MANUFACTURE OF COMPUTER COMPONENTS. GIVEN THE PROFOUND DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INDIAN AND EAST EUROPEAN NOTIONS OF ECONOMIC PLANNING, THE PLANNING COOPERATION AGREEMENT, WHICH SETS UP A STUDY GROUP, IS OF MARGINAL IMPORTANCE. LAST AND PERHAPS LEAST, THE RADIO AND TV COOPERATION AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR SALE OF RADIO AND TV PROGRAMS OF BOTH COUNTRIES TO THE OTHER.

4. A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED DECEMBER 4 BEFORE STROUGAL LEFT DELHI FOR HYDERABAD, MADRAS, BANGALORE, AND BOMBAY FOLLOWED THE DECEMBER 3 INDO-GDR COMMUNIQUE IN ITS ESSENTIALS. THE TWO SIDES AGREED ON INDIAN OCEAN ZONE OF PEACE (IOZP) LANGUAGE WHICH "CALLED FOR ABOLITION OF ALL FOREIGN MILITARY BASES AND STRONGLY OPPOSED STRENGTHENING OF EXISTING BASES LIKE THE ONE ON DIEGO GARCIA" (NEW DELHI 16307). THE CZECHOSLOVAK SIDE "NOTED WITH SATISFACTION" THE GOI'S STATEMENT THAT INDIA WILL

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USE HER NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES ONLY, AND BOTH SIDES ADHERED TO AN ASIAN SECURITY FORMULATION CLOSE TO THAT IN INDO-SOVIET COMMUNIQUE OF NOVEMBER 1973. THE COMMUNIQUE ADVISED THAT MRS. GANDHI ACCEPTED AN INVITATION TO VISIT CZECHOSLOVAKIA AT A MUTUALLY CONVENIENT TIME. SCHNEIDER

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